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Market Served: Wausau/Plover Stevens
Point

Call Letters: WRIG, WSAU, WIFC,
WDEZ, WOFG, WIZD

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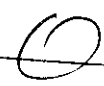
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Comments regarding MB Docket No. 04-233

Local News

- *Provide details on your stations investment in local news.* All of our stations view local news coverage as the cornerstone of community service. With the expansion of our news department, the number of newscasts has been increased on some of our stations. Our music FMs each provide between 25 and 30 local newscasts per week. WRIG provides 30 newscasts, and WSAU provides 250 newscasts per week. Our news department consists of a full-time News Director and various reporters.
- *How many local newscasts are aired per week?* Detailed above

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- *Do you allow on-air time for breaking news and local emergency information? YES Give examples.* The primary example is severe weather coverage, although the Midwest Radio Group-Wausau/Plover has a plan in place to provide simulcast coverage on all six of our stations in an emergency situation that would warrant it. The most recent example was a tornado in Stevens Point (Portage County in our listening area) this past summer. Our six stations provided over a half-hour of simulcast wall-to-wall coverage, with continuing updates once the warning expired. We welcome the opportunity to pre-empt any of our programming to provide information that is critical to the life and well-being of our audience. Another recent example was when WSAU's programming was pre-empted to provide coverage for a plane crash in the southern part of our service area.
- *Give examples of how your website is used to enhance local news coverage.* All of our stations' websites provide information on school cancellations, road construction and detours, and urgent information such as flu vaccine availability. Also, web users are able to access information about community events merely by clicking the appropriate link's Our websites are remarkably flexible tools that allow us this opportunity.

Local Public Affairs

- *Describe all daily or weekly programs devoted to local public affairs, local politics, community activities, and similar issues including the length of such programs.* WSAU News produces a thirty-minute weekly program called "Wisconsin Weekend" that airs on our stations. The news director picks two or three issues to explore in-depth with local newsmakers and experts. Because the program is produced on Friday, the topics are always of immediate interest to our community. Also, WRIG radio provides public affairs segments on the morning show as appropriate to talk about issues relating to the 55+ age group. This would include, but not be limited to, Social Security/Medicare topics, Veterans Affairs, the arts, fraud prevention, health and wellness, and continued literacy. Also, during the week, WSAU presents "55 Feedback" (9a-10a M-F), a call-in show devoted to local topics of concern.

Creating or Selecting Programming

- *Describe your stations efforts and practices for determining the types of programming you air. For example, do you have an open door policy, accept and review e-mailed suggestions, conduct polls*

of your local audience, perform auditorium tests of various programming? Our stations use all of these methods to determine what programming should air. Specifically, our music FMs use a great deal of call-out research and testing to determine musical selections that the audience prefers. To this end, there are partnerships with organizations such as Troy Research that help collect and collate data. This research is updated weekly and monthly. Also, there was a major "perceptual" study done by Mark Kasso and Company in October of 2003. As another example, WRIG changed back to an Adult Standards format from Hot Talk/Sports because of listener reaction. And, WDEZ added more news and election coverage as a direct result of a listener focus question.

- *Preemptions: Provide any examples when your station preempted network programming in order to air other programming of more interest to your local community, such as local political debates or local sporting events.* WSAU and WRIG air a considerable amount of high school sports. WSAU airs football, boys' and girls' basketball, and hockey matches for Wausau East High School. WRIG airs D.C. Everest High School football, boys' and girls' basketball, and hockey. WSAU has aired political debates between candidates for various offices in the past election cycle, from local to regional. WSAU has also aired the presidential and vice-presidential debates this year. Also, for the record, only WSAU and WRIG feature "network" (or "syndicated") programming. All the other stations originate programming locally.

Emergency Programming

- *Describe any live and/or on-the-scene coverage of emergencies, weather, traffic, crime and similar events, including any positive impact of your coverage on the local community.* Again, we refer back to our severe weather coverage to answer this question. The incident with the tornado in Stevens Point mentioned above is the most recent of many, many examples. With a six-stations simulcast, we served all of our listeners in the affected area, with their great appreciation. Also, during a Green Bay Packer football broadcast earlier this season, WSAU aired an Amber Alert and updates that flagship station WTMJ inserted into the broadcast.
- *Describe your stations weather forecasting service.* Our stations are contracted with WAOW-TV 9 and Great Lakes Weather Service, both in Wausau. They provide updates and on-air coverage to all of our stations, including severe weather coverage.

- *Do your stations participate in AMBER or EAS?* EAS participation is mandatory, despite obfuscatory wording to the contrary. That said our stations fulfill all the legal requirements of EAS participation. Our stations have elected to not participate in the EAS Amber Alert system, however, feeling that our local news department can do the job in a much better fashion. A plan has been discussed, and implementation is taking place.

Political Programming

- *Describe all candidate debates sponsored or aired.* Most recently, a debate on WSAU between the candidates for the 85th Assembly District in Wisconsin. Prior to that, there was a mayoral candidate debate in the spring of 2004 on WSAU. Also, WSAU aired the presidential and vice-presidential debates this election cycle.
- *Do your stations offer candidates other types of free airtime? Give examples, and include examples of candidates declining offers of free airtime.* Our stations do not offer free commercial airtime. However, the invitation is extended to appear on the WSAU daily show "55 Feedback," and candidates have taken advantage of that opportunity. Also, we provide regular coverage of candidates' rallies and position statements.
- *Are local political issues discussed, or candidates interviewed, during newscasts or public affairs programming on a regular basis?* Yes
- *Do your stations cover local campaign and /or convention events?* Yes. We have had several visits from Presidential candidates, spouses, and others during this election cycle, and they receive plenty of coverage on all of our stations.
- *Describe your stations participation in promoting voter registration drives.* Our stations recently provided coverage on a problem with absentee ballots--they were lacking a return address. We provided information about how to properly address and post the ballots for proper return. Other stories regarding voter registration are aired as they break.
- *Give examples of how your websites are used to enhance political coverage.* Our news department places news stories on all of our websites, so anything of local interest (including political coverage) would be included.

Civic, Cultural and Other Community-Responsive Programming

- *Please list examples of programming targeted to raise funds for local charity organizations.* "Disco Cures Cancer" is presented by WIFC every October. This year, the estimated total raised was \$15,000. The other major event is the St. Jude's Radiothon on WDEZ. Last year, \$70,000 was raised. Also, WDEZ just finished the "Books and Bears" event in conjunction with St. Anthony's school in Athens to provide these items (between \$3,000 and \$4,000 worth) to young hurricane victims in Florida. WOFM/WIZD present the Sweetheart's Dance in February for the American Heart Association. Also WOFM/WIZD present "Thanksgiving For All" each year, in which groceries are collected to give to local food pantries. Last year, nearly \$2,500 dollars worth of food was collected. Other events include WIFC's "Make A Wish Golf Outing," "Bowl For Kids' Sake," the "Heart Walks" for the American Heart Association, fundraisers for the Boys' and Girls' Club, and our stations are a "Platinum Sponsor" of shows at the Grand Theater in Wausau for this performance season. In addition, our stations are partnered with the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association and their PSA program, plus the "WBA Saves The Day" program in conjunction with the American Red Cross..
- *Describe any coverage of local events, such as local sports, fairs, holiday events, local theater, and fire or police outreach events.* Again, our public file is full of examples such as the Wisconsin Valley Fair, the Lincoln County Fair, the Wausau Jaycees' Fourth of July Celebration, Riverfront Rendezvous in Stevens Point, the "Bark In The Park" fundraiser for the Humane Society of Marathon County, the Wausau Renaissance Festival, the Big Bull Falls Blues Festival, and numerous events through the Performing Arts Foundation. These events are presented by all stations in our group.
- *Please list the number of Public Service Announcements aired per week.* On average, on all of our stations, at least 280 announcements air per week.
- *Please list examples of your Public Service outreach in the community.* See Above.
- *Please list your stations coverage of important issues affecting the local community, such as consumer rip-off's, smoking and other health hazards, safety, drinking and driving, domestic abuse and similar issues.* These items are routine parts of the programming on all of our stations, and because they are thus so numerous, it would be impossible to list them all. A radio station is not relevant if it does not address what the audience is most interested in hearing. All of our stations employ the "Health, Heart, and Pocketbook" method of determining what we should talk about, and the items above routinely top the list. We all do stories on health issues (the flu vaccine, the Vioxx scare, West Nile virus, hypertension, diabetes, etc) for example, and the city-wide ban on

smoking in public places is a hotly debated topic right now. All of our stations have devoted various amounts of time detailing this specific debate. All of our stations detail consumer scams, such as the recent rip-off regarding prescription drugs from Canada, and how the Social Security Administration is involved in the prosecution of the case. These are just a few of a myriad of examples.

Music

- *Do your stations provide on-air opportunities for local artists, either periodically or on a regular basis? YES Give examples.* Weekend music shows on WSAU, WDEZ, WOFM, and WIZD. Also, local artists have been featured in program segments of WIFC programming which poll the audience on their preference among a number of musical selections provided. These programs are named "Slam It Or Jam It," "Backstage '04," and the "Garage Band" series.
- *What percentage of your music programming is generated locally?* Among our music FM's, about 90-95%. On WRIG, the morning show is local.
- *Do your stations research the market to determine the type of music they want to hear locally?* As was mentioned previously, our stations are aggressive in audience research, including Troy Research for our music FM's.

Station Participation in Community Activities

- *Give examples of your stations support and involvement with non-profit and charity initiatives.* In addition to the numerous examples given above, a notable event was the collaboration between WIFC and WDEZ, where the night personalities went "on tour" together to raise money for the troops currently fighting overseas. Also, our stations have been involved in fundraising for relief of hurricane victims in Florida.
- *Provide examples of how your stations promote causes not tied to a particular organization, such as health screenings, free vaccinations, nutritional advice, community fundraisers, blood drives, disaster relief efforts, etc.* In addition to the examples listed above, WIFC has been involved in a "Send a letter/valentine to our troops" campaign, which has been quite successful. WDEZ recently rushed in a doctor to talk about the shortage of flu vaccine, as soon as the story broke. WSAU also provided coverage about health warnings about hepatitis from the Marathon County Health Department; coverage of flu shot shortages and guidelines from the state health department pertaining to this.